

Telegram from Foreign Minister Matsuoka to Ambassador
Oshima in Germany, dated 24 May 1941.

1. Foreign Minister Ribbentrop, according to your report, was surprised by the communication of the draft of the Japanese-American understanding, and was suspicious because I made no concrete reference during my recent visit to Europe to this matter. Actually I had a general exchange of opinion on the Japanese-American question with him during my stay in Berlin. As the main aim of the Tripartite Pact is to prevent the American participation in the war, it will naturally suit the common interests of the three powers to take appropriate diplomatic measures for that purpose. Therefore, I told on my way home to the American Ambassador ⁱⁿ Moscow, as I communicated to you by the previous telegram, to consider, (1) that the USA will not participate in the war, and (2) that the USA will recommend peace to Chang Kai-shek; moreover I declared to him, that (3) Japan cannot tolerate anything which affects the Tripartite Pact even in the slightest degree, and will go to war immediately if America enters in the war. I had him to send these points as a personal message of mine by telegram to the President. The US government proposed on 16 April, prior to my return home, a draft of general agreement concerning the regulation of Japanese-American relations, which came to my knowledge for the first time after my arrival in Tokyo. Therefore I had in Berlin no basis for a concrete discussion concerning this matter, and I

have no bad conscious towards Germany. Besides, above-mentioned three points will be kept firmly by us, now as well as in the future, and as far as the Japanese Government is concerned, there is no need for anxiety as expressed by Ribbentrop that it might take measures to weaken the Tripartite Pact. We made this point also clear to the USA by measures taken by me^{and} by Ambassador Nomura's statement to Secretary of State Hull etc..

2. Roosevelt's real intention is not difficult to surmise. I almost agree to the observations of Ribbentrop, but I think there is no need to be afraid of intrigues to separate Japan and Germany, so long as the both countries consider each other the Tripartite Pact as the firmly established national policy. Of course such intrigues of England and America will be intensified in the future, and the three countries Japan, Germany and Italy must increasinglyⁱ strengthen their moral tie. Should Germany and Italy have any doubt as to our intention even in the slightest degree concerning this matter, it would mean that they fell victim to the intrigues of our opponents. I therefore sincerely hope that Hitler and Ribbentrop trust me whole heartedly now. I already took appropriate steps, and Ribbentrop sent a message that he trusts me fully.

3. You reported that Ribbentrop was very unsatisfied because we opened the negotiation without waiting for the arrival of German opinion. However, we showed our utmost sincerity in withholding our answer to the USA for a week (we withheld the answer after all more than four weeks since the American proposal of the

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original draft); moreover, not only the Japanese, but also the American internal situation at that time was so strained that no more delay of even half a day could be tolerated (we had a confidential information that the US cabinet meeting of the 8th decided upon the policy of convoy, and a statement of the President was forthcoming on the 14th), and we sent at last our counter-proposal on the 12th to the USA, in order to prevent at any cost the carrying out of American convoy and to forestall the danger of war-participation. When Ribbentrop said that "I was compelled to agree by a certain faction," he entirely misunderstand my real intention, this matter, being historically only the fruit in a different form from seeds I had sown. In order to be loyal to the Tripartite Pact, I suppressed the desire of the military etc, to hasten the matter (this matter has no connection with the influence of "status-quo party" mentioned in your telegram, army and navy being most eager), and overcoming much difficulties I withhold to dispatch of our answer for a week. Also, that our counter-proposal was psychologically very well timed can be seen from the fact that Roosevelt, upon receiving it, postponed his statement from the 14th to the 27th. At any rate, I will do my utmost in the future as in the past to keep understanding with Germany and Italy, however Japan has her own standpoint, and I don't think it necessary to meet the intention of Germany and Italy even in the matter concerning the execution of policy.

However, you can be assured that there is no one in our Government who considers to deviate from the Tripartite Pact even in the slightest degree, and I think that the policy of Japan and Germany (and Italy) concerning this negotiation is the same, and there is not discrepancy between them. I believe that German suspicion has thereafter been removed completely by the intimate talks I had with Ambassador Ott for several times; yet I ask you to explain to Ribbentrop the above-mentioned points very thoroughly.

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No 1

文書、別紙ニ成立ニ關スル證明書 (三號)

自余 林 詮六 外務省文書課長、職ニ居ル者ナルニ因、茲ニ添付セラレタ日本語ニ依ツテ書カレ 五頁ヨリ成ル五月二十四日松岡大臣發在独大島大使宛電報ト題スル書類ハ日本政府(外務省)保管ニ係ル公文書、拔萃、正確ニシテ眞實ナル爲ニナルコトヲ證明ス

昭和二十三年五月三十日 於東京

林 詮六 (印)

右署名捺印ハ自分、面前ニ於テ爲サレタ

同日於同所

立會人 浦部勝彦 (印)

昭和二十二年二月

外交資料 日米交渉記録、部 外務省編纂
(昭和十六年三月十三日迄)

日米交渉資料(二)第三次近衛内閣時代(頁六一七四)

Ref Doc 1657

No. 2

五月二十四日松岡大臣發在德大島大使館電報
「外相ニ於テハ日米諒解案ニ關スル通
報ニ據シ意外ニ感ニ本大臣先般演說際
右ニ付何等具體的ノ語ヲ爲サザリ之故ヲ以
テ不審ノ念ヲ抱キ居ニ趣、處置員ハ伯林帶
在中一日米問題ニ付テハ同外相上ニ一般の意
見ヲ授ケ行ヒ居リ又三國條約ノ主要目
的ハ米國ノ參戰防止ニ在リ之ヲ爲メ通切
ナル外交工作ヲ施スコトハ三國共通ノ利
益トナルコト論ナキニ鑑ミ本大臣ハ往電中
進メノ通リ歸途莫斯科ニ於テ米國大使
シテ(一)參戰セザルコト及ヒ(二)稱々石ニ和平
ヲ勸告スルコトノ二點ニ付キ考慮ヲ促スト同
時ニ(三)三國條約ニ徹シ最モ影響ヲ及
シ及ホス力如キコトハ一切許ス能ハス若シ
米國ニシテ參戰セハ日本ハ直ニ參戰スベシ

No. 3

def doc 1657

ト迄言明ニ右本大臣、個人的「ムセ」ダ
ニテ大統領ニ電報セシタリ。
然ルニ米國政府ハ四月十六日本大臣ハ歸朝
ニ先立テ國友調睦ニ關スル全般的協
定案ヲ提示越シタリ本大臣ハ歸京後
初メ之ヲ承知セル様、経緯ニシテ
從ツテ伯林ニ於テハ本件ニ付テ具
体的協議ヲ行フ何等、基礎ヲ有
シ居ラサリシ次第ニラ此點ニ関シ
テハ獨側ニ對シ何等疚マシキ所
ナシ、尙上記三點ハ我ニ於テハ
現在、將來共堅持スヘキニ付帝國
政府、關スル限リ「リ」外相、危懼
スルカ如キ三國條約、弛緩ヲ致ス
虞アル措置直ヲ取ル如キ懸念ハ毫
末モ無之又米國側ニ於テモ其後
本大臣、講シタル處置直及野村
大使「ハ」長官ニ對スル陳述
等ニ依リ此點ハ更ニ明カニシアリ
(以下頁)

No 4

Ref No 1657

三「ル」大ケエルト、真意ハ盡シ臆測ニ難カラス「外
相、觀察ニハ本大臣モ概シ同感ナルカ苟クモ相互三
國條約ヲ不動、國策トスル以上米國ノ日獨離間策
如キハ敢テ恐ルニ足ラヌ尤モ莫米、離間策ハ今
後益々熾烈トナル、從ツテ此、際日獨伊三國當高
愈々精神の結束ヲ強固ニスル必要アリト存セラシ
獨伊カ本年ニ開ニ此ニカニ我ニ事ヲ疑フカ如キ
トアラハヒ總統及「外相」此際「々」本大臣ヲ信
賴スル様要望ニテ己マサルカ此點ニ就テハ充
分處置ニ「リ」外相ヨリモ絶對信頼、旨ヲ既ニ
申越セリ
三「外相」我方獨側意見到着ヲ待タヌ交渉ヲ開
始セリニ對シ多大ノ不滿ヲ有スルカ當方ハ(通
間ニ亘リ對米回答ヲ留保シ(結局米側原案提示
時ヨリ四週間餘モ回答ヲ留保セリ)誠意ヲ盡シタ
ル次第ニ至當時ハ國內情勢カ「ナラヌ米國國情甚
ク切迫セルモノアリ此、上ハ半日モ遷延シ難キ形勢トナ
リタル爲メ(八日、米政府閣議ニ於テハ「コングレイ」方
針決定セララルヤノ内報アリ、十四日ニハ大統領、聲
明行ハルヒ手筈トナリ居リタリ)我方トシテハ如何様
ニモ「米國」コングレイ「賣施」ヲ阻止シ參戰ノ危險
ヲ封シ度キ見地ヨリ遂ニ十二日米側ニ我提案ヲ提示セ
ルモノナリ、本大臣カ「或」派ニ引摺ラシ己ムナク同意セリト

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No. 5

云々カ如キハ本大臣ノ真意ヲ解セサルノ甚ニキモノト云
フ他ナク本件ハ前記ノ如ク其ノ由來ニ於テ本大臣ノ時
キタル種ノ形ヲ變ヘテ結實セルモノニ過ギス唯本大臣ハ
三國條約ニ飽遠忠實ナレカ爲ニ軍部(本件ノ眞
電ニ所謂現状維持派ノ勢力ト全然關係ナク寧ろ
陸海軍カ最も熱心ナリ)其他カ頻リニ注意スルヲ抑幾
多ノ困難ニ遭遇セシモ(週問ニ亘リ回答發出ラズ
控ヘタル次第ナリ)又紙對中提示カ能ク心理的「モメント」
ヲ擲ニ居タルコトハ「ルズ」カ右ニ接シテ十四日ノ聲
明ヲ二十七日ニ延期セル事實ニ徴スルモ明カナリ何レニ
セヨ本大臣ハ從來同様將來モ亦獨伊トリノ解疏通
ニ金力ヲ盡スベキモ帝國ニハ又自ラ帝國獨自ノ立場
アリ政策ノ運用ニ付テ迄モ獨伊ノ意ヲ迎フル必要ハナキ
モノト信ニ居シリ。但シ三國條約ヨリ此ニカニテモ逸脱スル
カ如キコトヲ考慮ニ居ルモ(我政府部内ニハ現ニ名モナキ
ニ付此點御安心アリタラヌ又本件交渉方針ニ關シテハ目下
日獨(伊)ノ意嚮ハ同様ニシテ其間何事ノ齟齬ナク又
其後「オット」トノ數次ノ懇談ニ依リ獨逸側ノ懸念モ
既ニ氷解ニ居ルモノト信スルモ以上諸駐實大使ヨ
リモ「外相」ニ篤ト御説明相煩度シ